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VALUES

By C. C. Nutting

"For what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

I stood before the great altar in the Basilica of St. Peter's at Rome, awed by the sheer vastness of that colossal building and strangely moved by the almost barbaric splendor of ornamentation in this, the mother church of the Roman Catholic world. From the mosaics in the dizzy heights of the great dome to the spiral bronze columns of the high altar before me was a lavish display of priceless material and elaborate designs hardly to be matched in the whole world.

Turning, I was face to face with two handsome, clean-looking American boys. One was the son of the Governor of a great western state, a man of wealth and national prominence. After mutual self-introductions, I asked this boy how long he expected to remain in Rome. He said:

"We got here yesterday afternoon expecting to stay a week or so, but *there is nothing here,* and we go on to Naples to-night."

Nothing here! Nothing in Rome the Imperial city, with its Vatican filled with priceless treasures of art, its Coliseum sacred to all Christendom for the blood of countless martyrs, its Pantheon, its triumphal arches built when this was the mistress of the world. Nothing in Rome with its catacombs and Forum and temples dedicated to the gods of old and its countless churches dedicated to the Christ. Oh, the pity of it!

The poor, atrophied, shriveled soul in the splendid body of this clear-eyed, alert, snappy American boy, recently graduated from a famous state university! The pity of it! How came this soul to be so dwarfed? What sort of an education had his alma mater given that there was nothing in Rome for him?

Is there significance in the fact that that particular institution was among the first to yield to the clamor for a "practical" education? Had he taken a purely vocational course from which he went forth fully equipped to make a living, *but knowing not how to live?* Was this why he was sent abroad with money in his pocket, but blind to the glories of Rome?

"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

Turning, sick at heart, I faced a woman. Pale she was, and poorly clad. She bore all too plainly the impress of the Cook's tourist and the American school-teacher. But, oh, *the soul of her!* The soul that showed through its windows, as she stood with white, blue-veined hands clasped before her, in front of the high altar, silent, her eyes filled with an ineffable ecstasy as her hungry soul reveled in the long-deferred joy of its cherished dream. She had paid a great price. Back in the little school-house she had toiled for many a weary year at a pitiful wage, upheld by the wonderful vision of her soul. Dollar by dollar she had saved and laid aside. Privation she had known, and a great burden she had borne bravely, nobly, upheld by the vision. Truly, she had paid a great price!

Was she satisfied with her bargain? Look, for answer, on that glorified, pale face and shining eyes, misty at times with pure, unspeakable happiness. She had paid a great price, but her hungry soul was satisfied at last.

Look upon this picture, and on that. The boy and the woman before the high altar in St. Peter's, and tell me which had the truer appreciation of the real values in life. Nothing in Rome for the one, a soulfull, pressed down, and running over for the other.

The great volcano, Vesuvius, was in eruption more spectacular than had been known for many a decade. A friend had joined with me in securing a good telescope which we had mounted on the flat roof of the pension where we lived in Naples. As night came on, we settled down to a real feast of the soul. The instrument brought into startling proximity the two craters, for a new one had broken out on the side of the huge mountain, and both were spouting flame and great masses of rock thousands of feet into the air, piercing the pall of black smoke that rose ominous above the peak. Three glowing rivers of lava, eating their way through the vineyards toward Herculaneum were brought within an apparent distance of a half-mile. Rare good fortune had presented the spectacle of a life-time, a picture to hang vivid on the walls of memory so long as memory shall endure.

The daughter of my friend was with us. She glanced for a moment through the telescope, and then turned listlessly away with the words:

"Papa, let's go down to the Villa Nazionale and get some ice cream!" He, a typical indulgent American father, sighed wistfully and resigned himself to his fate, and they were not seen again that night.

That poor, foolish girl with the withered soul had bartered the chance of a lifetime, both for herself and her unfortunate father, *for a dish of ice cream!* What a conception of real values was hers!

The ruler of a great empire had his vision. In his royal arrogance he said: "I will succeed where Charlemagne and Napoleon failed. My empire

shall be the World, and I will be its Overlord! I will prepare for the great day for which my fathers have planned for many years by added decades devoted to such efficiency and foresight as have never before been brought to bear on any human objective."

And so his wise men planned so shrewdly that his commerce all but conquered the world. His War Lords devised and built a military machine of unprecedented size and efficiency, and a navy second to only one in the world. Mobilization was so minutely figured out that every man in the Empire knew exactly what was expected of him. Unheard of quantities of munitions, guns, and military supplies were gathered quietly but surely. New and terrible engines of destruction were devised by his scientific experts, and his spies were sent out through all the earth. So, when "der Tag" at last arrived, no least detail was wanting to secure success.

In the meanwhile, however, his subjects had been so drilled in obedience that they became but human machines; the soul of that great Nation had shrunken and eternal values were forgotten. More fatal still was the fact that his War Lords had entirely overlooked the "imponderables." They had forgotten that the World has a soul that must be reckoned with. They had forgotten that Belgium had a soul that could not be conquered, even when the great war machine rolled ruthlessly over the bodies of her heroic sons.

They had forgot also that France, bleeding and shattered France, had a soul that could say, *"They shall not pass!"* And the German armies reeled back, staggered by the impact of that unconquerable soul of France. They forgot that Britain had a soul that enabled her "contemptible little army" to help retard with its pitiful, thin line the invading hordes, until France could prepare her defence at the Marne; and that the British Colonies would rally to the defense of the mother country and save her in the time of stress. They forgot that the Canadians had a soul that withstood the fiendish gas attack at Ypres, as they gasped and strangled and died horribly, but would not yield. God bless the great soul of Canada, our sister of the North!

Aye, and they forgot that America had a soul that, although slow to anger, became terrible in its wrath. A soul that could and did rise above the almighty dollar and throw billions and billions of them into the conflict, with no thought of material reward. A soul that, in spite of unpreparedness, colossal waste, and unbelievable blunders, could transfer two millions of her sons across the water in time to throw them into the line when France and Britain were reeling backward in defeat, their cause all but lost. And they thought that America would not fight!

Never again will it be forgotten that Nations have souls. The efficiency of Germany was well-nigh flawless; but its psychology, its sense of soul values, was *rotten,* and lost them the Great War!

The efficiency expert said to the employer of labor: "I have carefully and successfully analyzed the movements necessary in laying brick. I have simplified the process so as to eliminate every unessential motion. I have reduced to a minimum the muscular energy required. I can easily convince you of the deplorable waste of energy in the old go-as-you-please manner of brick-laying. I can absolutely promise that, if you adopt my method and require your men to learn it and use it according to instructions, the cost of brick-laying will be materially reduced, and the men will have shorter hours, easier work, and better pay."

"Why, man," said the employer, "these are the very things which labor has been insistently demanding for these many years. Inability to grant

them and still make a reasonable profit in my business as a contractor has been the cause of innumerable strikes, riots, and bitter discontent on the part of labor; and of lock-outs, importations of strike breakers and perpetual anxiety on my part. If you can make good on your claims, the problem of labor versus capital has been solved, and the world will arise and call you blessed! We shall inaugurate your system at once."

Now, as a matter of fact, the efficiency expert was entirely correct in every one of his statements. The work *was* easier, the hours *were* shortened and the amount accomplished per hour was so far above that attained by the old method that the employer was easily able to very materially increase the daily wage. The results were simply astonishing, and a brighter day seemed to have dawned.

But, to the amazement of the world, the labor unions began to protest and finally put a veto on the whole scheme.

What was the matter? I very much doubt whether the unions could present a coherent and plausible answer to this query. The men simply did not like it and wanted no more of it.

The key to the answer to this question, and innumreable others, is found in the following quotation from Carlton H. Parker, the brilliant young economist whose untimely death was a real loss to the world. He says:

"The dynamic psychology of to-day describes the present civilization as a repressive environment. For a great number of its inhabitants a sufficient self-expression is denied."

Let us put it in another way. Self-expression is one of the most fundamental of all human instincts; more basic than the desire for money, easy work, or shorter hours. Self-expression is the insistent demand of each individual soul. It is as necessary to the soul as breathing is to the body.

The efficiency expert was right, just as the Kaiser was right, from every material standpoint. Each, however, made the fatal mistake of ignoring soul values.

The Kaiser forgot that nations have souls. The efficiency expert forgot that workmen have souls. He reduced them to smooth-running machines, wonderfully effective machines too; but he took the joy and all possible pride and individuality out of their work. They hardly knew what was wrong, but they simply did not like it and finally refused it. They were, perhaps unconsciously, but nevertheless profoundly, *wise*.

The thwarting of this basic desire, or let us call it need, of self-expression is the cause of most of the economic disturbances and unrest of to-day. It seems bound to increase with the growing complexity of civilization, and no mere material gain in wage or bodily comfort can offset it.

This fact is well illustrated by a conversation between my mother and one of her *protégés*, a negro washerwoman who had been a slave. Freedom, however, had brought grinding poverty, hard work, and much discomfort. She stood over her washtub in her little tumble-down shanty, in a stifling atmosphere and surrounded by numerous pickaninnies, swarms of flies and dirt everywhere.

My mother said: "Mandy, I sometimes wonder if you do not long for the old times when your master —who was a good man, you say—gave you plenty to eat, good clothes, a nice little cabin, and saw to it that you were comfortable and did not work too hard."

"Yas-m, Yas-m, Mrs. Nuttin'. Ole massa was sholy good to his niggahs, jess like you say. We had plenty to eat, 'nuff to wear; an', My Lord, I nevah worked

like dis heah in all my life befo'. But I wouldn't go back, Mrs. Nuttin', I wouldn't go back, kase I *shorely does lub my dirty little bit of freedom!"*

There you have the cry of the soul that is at the bottom of all strikes, all revolutions, all industrial disturbances. And it will not down!

This poor, ignorant black woman, toiling, sweating amidst flies, pickannes, and dirt, will not barter her pitiful little bit of freedom for the food, clothing, and bodily comforts of servitude. She has learned something of soul values by her own bitter experience and she will not give them up.

Since man first became a living soul, nay, before the cry became articulate, freedom, the right of self-expression has ever been the pearl of great price for which all men, of all ages, have been willing to barter everything, even life itself.

Here, then, it seems to me, is the one great, overshadowing, irrepressible conflict. As civilization advances and the struggle for life becomes fiercer and ever more complex, mass action seems more and more imperative. Men are forced to combine to defend their rights. Clans, tribes, nations, and states arise, each more complex than its predecessor. United action, or mass action, means laws, and laws mean giving up of individual rights for the common good. Then within the nation itself classes arise, each with interests opposed to others. Guilds and trades unions become strong; and, being strong, are more and more aggressive, more and more arrogant. The laborer finds his freedom, his self-expression, restricted or ignored by his employer and turns for relief to his union. Here again he finds self-expression denied him, finds himself the slave of the very agency that he has created for his own protection.

The walking delegate is as cruel, and usually more ignorant, than the boss he has been taught to call his enemy. The more perfect the machine which labor has constructed, the more complete is its servitude. This machine, this guild or union, takes little account of real soul values, although its constant cry is for freedom! In the name of freedom the laborer must restrict his output and deprive himself of the possibility of bettering his condition. He must limit his earning capacity by limiting his hours. He must do no kind of work not permitted by his union. He must be a machine, with no initiative, no joy in his work, no incentive to do good work, no soul of his own. In any event, the seemingly necessary mass action, even if it results in better wages, better hours, better working conditions does not meet the need of his soul for self-expression, and his individuality is smothered.

In self-defense the employers also unite for mass action or class action. Two mighty forces are thus created and brought face to face as enemies, and the deadly conflict of class against class arises within the nation.

A great people, tried beyond endurance by the most autocratic of all emperors, throws off the yoke, slaughters its rulers, in the name of freedom. The most extreme and violent of the long-oppressed people rise to the top, and in the name of freedom inaugurate a rule of terror in which no vestige of freedom remains; and we see the Soviet Russia of today, a tyranny more terrible than that of the Czars.

That which started out as a mass action in the sacred name of freedom results in the abject slavery of these same masses. Soul values are utterly extinct. There is no God, no religion, no family rights, no individual rights; nothing but brute force reigning by bloody terror alone.

Have we come to an *impasse?* Does the complexity of advancing civilization demand class action, and does class action demand the smothering of self-expression?

Does the cry of freedom make imperative mass action against the oppressor only to lead a people into worse slavery in which the soul of a nation is crucified?

Your speaker is no sociologist and knows little about political economy; and you are probably amazed at his temerity in discussing matters rightly belonging to these fields; he is simply a biologist. But he begs to call your attention to the fact often forgotten that biology lies at the basis of all matters pertaining to living things, including man himself. Its laws underlie, are the sub-structure, in fact, of sociology, political economy, and even philosophy. Any system that ignores or violates these laws is foredoomed to failure just as surely as man is an animal and a product of evolution, indeed its supreme achievement.

I believe that biology has a message that may be of value to our brothers in the field of sociology and political economy. It seems to me possible to point out the fundamental biological error that has led to disaster in the well-meant attempts at adjustment in the labor situation, as well as the underlying fallacy in the various forms of socialism, communism, and even the tragedy of Bolshevik Russia.

As a biologist it seems to me possible to point out the seat of disease in the body politic, to diagnose the trouble. The remedy lies in the province of political economy, sociology, and religion, a realm into which the present speaker would not feel justified in further intruding.

All progress in the evolution of living things is based upon what we call individual variation. In the lower forms this variation is almost purely physical, and the selecting out of these favorable variations by the process of what Darwin has so aptly called Natural Selection has resulted, we believe, in the better fitting of the organisms to their environment, and continual improvement, or evolution.

Most of the lower forms of life, possibly even the lowest, exhibit certain characteristic activities which constitute the "behavior" of animals. There is individual variation in behavior as well as in other matters, and behavior is improved and more nicely adjusted to the environment and becomes more complicated along with the organism itself; and this adjustment is done by natural selection favoring those animals which exhibit an improvement over the average of the behavior of their kind. Even the lower forms, therefore, have an individualism not only physical but psychical. And Nature encourages this individualism by carefully selecting and preserving the best. She has *never* encouraged her children to cut down their behavior to the average level of that of the species, but has always placed a premium on superior behavior; or, if you please, superior individualism.

Man is subject to the same laws as his more lowly brothers, and he, too, has developed a behavior that is vastly more complex, but still not differing greatly in kind, than that of lower forms. There is not only physical behavior, but also psychical behavior. Individual intellectual differences are perhaps the most variable of all, and they constitute the material from which improvement of the race must come in the future as well as in the past.

In the sense employed in this discussion the soul of man is his essential self, or *ego,* the sum of all his mental and moral attributes including those small but really important individual characteristics which go to make the real man, or self. As I said before, self-expression is one of the strongest, most primitive and most imperative of our so-called "instincts;" and our racial progress thus far has been based on the selection and preservation of those

types of ego best fitted to man's environment. They are humanity's *most valuable asset,* its main reliance in the past, its real hope for the future!

Now the fallacy, the basal error, involved in such efficiency schemes as we have described, trades unionism, autocracy, communism, socialism, and bolshevism, is that they all try to level man down to the average, instead of encouraging and utilizing to the utmost the expression of individualism, or what Parker called "self-expression." They have denied one of the most fundamental and vital of instincts and violated one of the most important of all natural laws, the law of Natural Selection. They have reckoned with every element in their problem except the most important and most vital of them all—*soul values!*

In my opinion this is enough to explain the more or less complete failure of all of these systems, and until soul value, self-expression, is recognized as of primary importance, the problem is hopeless from the strictly biological standpoint.

Now, to come nearer home. What is the real aim of education? What is the primary function of this university? The answer to both of these questions is perfectly plain and definite. The function of education of all kinds, particularly in the college and university, is to find, select out, and encourage in every possible way *the exceptional man or woman.* The function of the college of liberal arts is to find him, and the supreme function of the graduate college is to develop him to the utmost, to give his individuality, his self-consciousness the fullest possible scope. For he, or she, is the most valuable asset of the state and of civilization itself. He is the hope of the world!

Not the number of students enrolled, but the number and quality of the output is the test of a university, or any other educational institution. By this test our own university finds its fullest justification. And when I hear that our graduate college stands first or second among state universities, I am indeed proud of our rank among these outstanding American institutions, and proud of being permitted to serve such a university for so many years.

Our high schools, too, have a most important function in finding the exceptional man and inducing him to go on to college or the university. I have serious misgivings, however, when I am told that a survey in Indiana indicates the fact that a no larger percentage of superior high school students enter the college or university than of average or even inferior students.

It seems as if the selection were on other grounds than demonstrated ability, and that the high schools are not living up to their opportunity in this vital matter of finding the exceptional man or woman.

With the increasing complexity of civilization the function of education becomes equally complex. Twenty-five years ago the college or university was acknowledged to be for the chosen few. Education was mainly, if not exclusively, cultural and the university for the intellectual aristocracy. Then two new demands confronted it. First, the university should connect up more intimately with the public schools through the high school, so that the educational system of the state should be a continuous whole, with the university at the apex. This meant readjustment of curricula, including the abandonment of the stress on the classics, the lowering of the requirements in language and mathematics, and the admission of subjects hitherto treated in the high school but not in the university.

The second demand was for more "practical" courses and "vocational" courses in liberal arts in addition to the work of the professional colleges. For a time these courses seemed a real menace to

the carrying out of what some of us thought to be the real function of the university; but the danger was largely averted by providing that each vocational course should require a sufficient amount of non-vocational academic work to make it possible for every student to go to Rome with something of vision to enable him to see Rome with some measure of success.

Meanwhile the professional colleges stiffened their requirements so that a considerable amount of liberal arts work was made a prerequisite to entering these colleges, a move the wisdom of which has been questioned by no one, so far as I know. At the same time tuition in liberal arts was reduced until it became little more than nominal.

These factors all united in greatly increased enrollment, a greatly expanded instructional staff and immensely enlarged appropriations. We hardly realize how large a growth the past third of a century has witnessed. For instance, I find, upon comparing the catalogue of the year in which I came with that of last year, that the entire enrollment of the university was just about 500 students in 1886, while that of last year was approximately 5,000. If this growth should continue, many of those present here to-day will see a university with 50,000 students! Impossible, you say? I assure you that 50,000 sounds no more incredible to-day than 5,000 did then. I well remember when an optimistic Governor declared that the day would come "when a thousand students would attend the State University of Iowa;" and we thought him a dreamer of dreams.

The problem is this: How can this intricate machine be administered with efficiency and at the same time retain what seems to be the primary aim of education—the self-expression of both faculty and students? How to retain the soul values and at the same time avoid reducing the university to a mere machine, efficient, to be sure, but a mechanism instead of a living organism.

The problem is indeed serious, even appalling, when viewed with all its implications. Is it hopeless?

The increase in efficiency has been phenomenal. Many of us heard with genuine satisfaction the other evening that, from the results of an efficiency survey of the various states in this country, it appears that during the past eight years the state of Iowa has risen from 30th to 7th in the United States. To my mind this is a matter of sincerest congratulations. I understand also that the university itself has kept pace with the remainder of the school system in this matter.

But the supreme achievement of the administration is that, along with this superb record of increased efficiency of the university, that which we might well have feared has not happened. I have yet to hear of a single instance in which the academic freedom of a member of the instructional staff has been impaired by any act of the university administration! I know of no case in which the self-expression of an instructor has been denied him by official restriction, although it has been seriously interfered with by the press of duties imposed by the greatly increased number of students.

But there is still a problem the solution of which will demand the utmost wisdom of all concerned.

The greatly increasing enrollment, while gratifying in some respects, is a real menace that must be confronted. We are approaching the time when *mass instruction* seems to some the only way out of our difficulties. I tremble for higher education when I learn that a great university has classes numbering some 500 students, who attend lectures in a body and are then broken up into quiz sections under numerous instructors.

Darwin was right when he said that the very worst method of imparting scientific instruction was the lecture system. Natural science can be taught properly only when the student, the specimens, and a competent instructor are brought together; and this can not be done by mass instruction. The individuality of the student is stifled when he can not, specimen in hand, discuss matters with the one in charge of the course. The self-expression of the instructors in charge of the sections is hampered, fatally it seems to me, because they have to follow the lead of lectures not prepared by themselves. I do not see how the real soul values can be preserved by such a system, and I firmly believe that the university must see that these values are preserved, no matter what the cost!

Young men and women of the graduating class: Each one of you stands to-day in the market-place of the world to make an investment, and that investment is *your life*. You cannot withhold it; you must spend it in some way. Your birthright is your self, your soul. Will you sell it for a mess of pottage, or will you invest shrewdly, thoughtfully, wisely, with an aim to secure a return in real values, in soul values?

It is my firm belief that each one of you, with few exceptions, can get from life the thing that you most desire; that you can, within reasonable limits, attain your highest ambition—if you will pay the price.

Any one of you can become wealthy, if that is the supreme good for which you will give up everything else. You can attain power, if you will pay the price that the world demands for power. You stand before the bargain counter of the world. In what will you invest your life?

I venture to suggest a few good lines of investment which will return dividends in real soul values.

Invest in a sound body; for it is the only efficient instrument of a sound mind.

Invest in friendship; for the friendless man, though a millionaire, is but a pauper. "The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried, grip them to thy soul with hooks of steel."

Invest in love; for, as Drummond has said, "Love is the greatest thing in the world."

Invest in a family, in a wife or husband; for this investment, if made wisely, will secure for you a happiness that is nearer Heaven than any other on earth.

Invest in congenial work; for it is better to make a living at what you enjoy than to secure wealth in doing what you dislike.

Face your work with courage and confidence and remember that the most notable successes are achieved by doing that which men say cannot be done!

Invest in service; for that is the secret of contentment and real soul power. "Whosoever of you will be the chiefest, let him be the servant of all."

Invest in religion; for only "the fool hath said in his heart—'There is no God.' "

And finally, I charge you in the name of your Alma Mater, to see to it that you are your own master, that your life expresses your very self! "To thine own self be true."

See to it that, whatever befalls, you can stand erect before your fellow men and say: "I am the master of my fate. I am the Captain of my soul!"

And when the westering Sun gilds the evening of your life, you will be content; for you have bartered wisely, and have gathered imperishable wealth—the riches of the soul.

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